

A

REVIEW

OF THE

STATE

OF THE

BRITISH NATION.

Saturday, February 21. 1708.

I Gave you Hint in the last *Miscellany*, of the Report rais'd here of the great Preparations made by the *French*, in order to some extraordinary Expedition; and as no Body knows which Way the Comet points, every Body are spending their Verdicts upon the Issue, and I among the rest.

I have not Assurance enough to tell you, as some do, where they design to go; I assure you, I am none of your new Prophets, nor am I As-tro-logger enough to tell you, the Port they will land at, from the Language of the Stars; perhaps I may say something by Way of probable Conjecture at their Design, before I have done; in the mean time let me talk of it a new Way, and by a Method of my own, take upon me to hint to you some of the good Effects,

and some of the evil Effects of a *French* Invasion.

Good Effects of a *French* Invasion? What's the D. . . in this Fellow now, says one that reads this Paper? This is a fine Tale indeed, what does he mean by that? I'll tell you what I mean by it in so many Words, for I must tell you, this *French* Invasion, should it ever happen, as I must own, I do not yet see Cause to apprehend hereabout, among its many Effects and ruinous Consequences; which it would be accompany'd with, not a few would yet have some good Effects, and that such as in the End might turn very much to the Advantage of the Protestant Cause in general; and tho' as strong Physick puts the Body into some Convulsions, but the more effectually purges out the noxious Matter that disorders the Body, and threatens its De-

Defraction, it might very much discompose, but in the End do us no Harm.

And first, Gentlemen of Faction and Party; you that are ever invading one another, and holding the Knife to the Throat of your Neighbours Reputation, you that declare War against your Countries Peace for Trifles, that fall out you know not why, and aim at you know not what; a *French* Invasion would make you all Friends, it would reconcile all your little Party-Pique, and your unneighbourly, ungentlemanly Treatment of one another; it would find you other Work, and you would soon see, that the *French* being equally Enemies to both of you, it behov'd you to unite for mutual Defence, and set your Shoulders together to lift that Burthen off from your native Country— And would not this be a great Work once effectually brought to pass over this whole divided Nation? Indeed it would be so great Good, that I wish we could purchase it at a much greater Penalty, than the Mischief is, which I apprehend from a *French* Invasion.

And could we but look at our present Posture, at our present Temper, with the same Eyes we should do under such a Circumstance, what a Monster would our Party-Strife look like! How inconsistent with Order, with Government, with Happiness, nay with common Sense, would our present Conduct, as it respects one another, appear?

Are you hating, damning, and condemning one another about Parties? Are you divided into Parties in Elections, with the utmost Animosity even to breaking of Windows, as at *Gainsborough*, and breaking Bones, as at *Coventry*, breaking the Laws, as at *Devizes*, and a thousand Places more, and breaking the Peace of Charity and good Manners every where? Patience, Gentlemen, if the *French* should come, they would reconcile you all; then you would take one another by the Hand, and condoling the common Calamity in which you would find yourselves equal Sufferers, for the *French* would make no Parties in their Oppressions; Then you would cry, come Neighbour, come Countrymen, we are all *English* Men, let us lay aside these old Follies, and help one

another against this common Enemy; come Neighbour, we have been all along fighting with one another, and making Way by our Divisions for this foreign Enemy; let us be Friends now, and lay all our Quarrels asleep; we may see plain enough what it has brought us to—Then you will kiss and embrace one another, and lament your ridiculous Blindness: *Ab, Jerusalem, Jerusalem!* Could'st thou but know now the Things of THIS PEACE, how happy would it be, and how easily might *French* Invasions be still prevented, or at least be universally despised!

How long, and to how little Purpose have the Friends of your Prosperity inculcated the Necessity, the Advantage, and the Beauty of Peace with one another! How have honest Men pray'd for it, wife Men endeavour'd it, the QUEEN entreated you to it, and your own Eyes invited!— And must the *French* be your Schoolmasters at last? Will you learn nothing but from your Enemies, nor gain any thing but by your Losses? Unhappy *Britain!* Fated to pay dearest for their best Knowledge, and to be never taught but by Experiments; that take no Warning but from Demonstrations, and must have their Instruction and their Destruction come together.

And what will the *French* teach us when they come, supposing they should come?

Truly, they will teach us a great many Lessons, which we might, if we had been wise, have learn'd without them; and which, had our Sences been our Instructors, Providence has often given us Opportunity to learn.

1. They would teach us to pay Taxes without murmuring at the Government, by letting us see the Difference between paying reasonable Taxes, legally proportion'd, to keep an Enemy out, and arbitrary Contributions imposed by an Army without Respect to Circumstances; by an Enemy in our Bowels, they would teach us the Difference between paying a Part, and losing all.

2. They

2. They would teach us the Difference between a War kept at a Distance, and the Calamities of it represented only in our *Gazettes*, to help us pity our Neighbours, and all our Neighbours pitying us for the Miseries and Desolations of a ruin'd, ravag'd Country — By which we should be brought to acknowledge the Wisdom of our Governours, whom we have so often abused for carrying the Money out of the Nation, and taken care to keep the War at a Distance from us.
3. They would teach us what a wretched Party that is among us, who call themselves *English Men*, and yet can with, *Alas, and endeavour too*, to bring such a Destruction upon us, as a *French Government* must by Consequence bring with it.
4. They would teach us to put a right Value upon our Strength, and not so over-value our selves, as to think, the whole World dare not insult us; they would perhaps help to make us more humble and more cautious too, and at last awaken our People, whose Pride, not their Judgment, has always kept secure; they say in *Germany*, a *French Army* is the best Memorial to hasten the Imperial *Queens's*; a *French Insult* would rouse us to that severe Prosecution of the War, as might bring it to a speedy End.
5. I Think, the *French* would teach us another thing, which we very much want to be instructed about, *viz.* How to choose *Parliament Men*, and *who to choose* for that important Service — It is hard, we should never learn such useful Lessons, till such Schoolmasters come to teach us, and, *let them take an Authors Word for it*, the Discipline will be very severe.

When the Duke of *Somerset* invaded *Scotland* under King *Edward VI.* upon the *Scots* rejecting the uniting the Crowns by a Marriage of their Queen *Mary* to our King *Edward*, upon which ensued the famous Battle of *Pinkie*; The Duke asking some of the *Scots Nobility*, what they had to say against

such an Offer, and why they did not like the Match with *England*? — One of them answer'd to this Purpose, That they lik'd the Match well enough, but they did not like his *Way of Wooing*.

Gentlemen, if the *French* must come to teach us Wit, we may like the Lesson, but, upon my Word, you will have no great Occasion to like the Teachers; Woe to you, that will not be wise without such Instructors, and yet in many Cases we find it so — Afflictions make Christians, and the Devil sends many a Man to Heaven, *I speak of Seconds, not Principles*; and what need we go for an Example, I'll prove to you, that it is not an unjust Censure to say of this Nation, that they will never learn heartily to oppose *French Interests* and *French Bondage*, till the *French* come to be their Instructors, and this from your own Practice.

How earnestly did those honest Men, whose Eyes GOD had open'd, to see the Danger, labour to prevent the Mischiefs of a Popish Tyranny in *England*, in the Reign of King *Charles II*? How did they struggle in Parliament and out of Parliament, to exclude a Prince that did not mock them, but really promised them, in as plain Words as Actions could speak, that he would be a Tyrant, that he would erect Arbitrary Power upon the Foot of their Liberties, as soon as he had the Reins in his Hand? How were the Opposers of this Inundation oppress'd by Power, and born down in the Stream of it? — And when they were massacred by that bloody Generation, how did they warn us at their Deaths, of the Mischiefs that were coming?

Yet, all this while, Deaf, as the *Adder*, to the Voice of the Charmer, Stupid and Hard, as the *Nether-Mill-stone*, we would not believe, nor put our Hand to our Deliverance, till that same Popery, that same Tyranny, and that very Party we struggled with, were sent to be our Instructors — And then we LEARNT THE LESSON presently.

Tyranny taught us the Value of Liberty, *Oppression* instructed us how to prize the Fence of Laws, and *Popery* shew'd us the Danger of the *Protestant Religion*.

Then